

1/1/1936

LIBRARY



WHITCHURCH URBAN DISTRICT

R E P O R T

- of the -

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

- for the year -

1 9 3 6.

WHITCHURCH URBAN DISTRICT.

R E P O R T of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1938.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE AUTHORITY.

Medical Officer of Health. M. GEPP. D.P.H. (S.W. Salop Combined Districts).

Sanitary Inspector. M. W. Sowden. Also holds office as Surveyor and Water Works Engineer.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (in acres). 5,996.

Registrar-General's estimate of resident population mid 1938. 6,328

Number of inhabited houses (end of 1938) according to Rate Books. 1,870

Rateable Value. £37,482. Sum represented by a penny rate. £144

Social Conditions. The District comprises the town of Whitchurch, with modern extensions radiating from the old and compact centre, and a considerable area of agricultural and dairy land. Whitchurch is a market and residential town and a centre and market of a large cheese making industry. There are an engineering works, a steam laundry and a creamery. Modern extensions consist largely of good class and well spaced artisan dwellings, while in the old centre there remain some streets and yards where the houses are often below a good standard, and occupied at low rents by a class of small wage earners. Improvement is proceeding by closing or demolition of the worst of these, and the Council has built, and owns, house property amounting to 14 per cent of the inhabited houses.

Under the Salop Review Order, a considerable area of agricultural land was added to the District, with 14 farm houses and 23 dwelling houses. The added area is 1213 acres.

VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR.

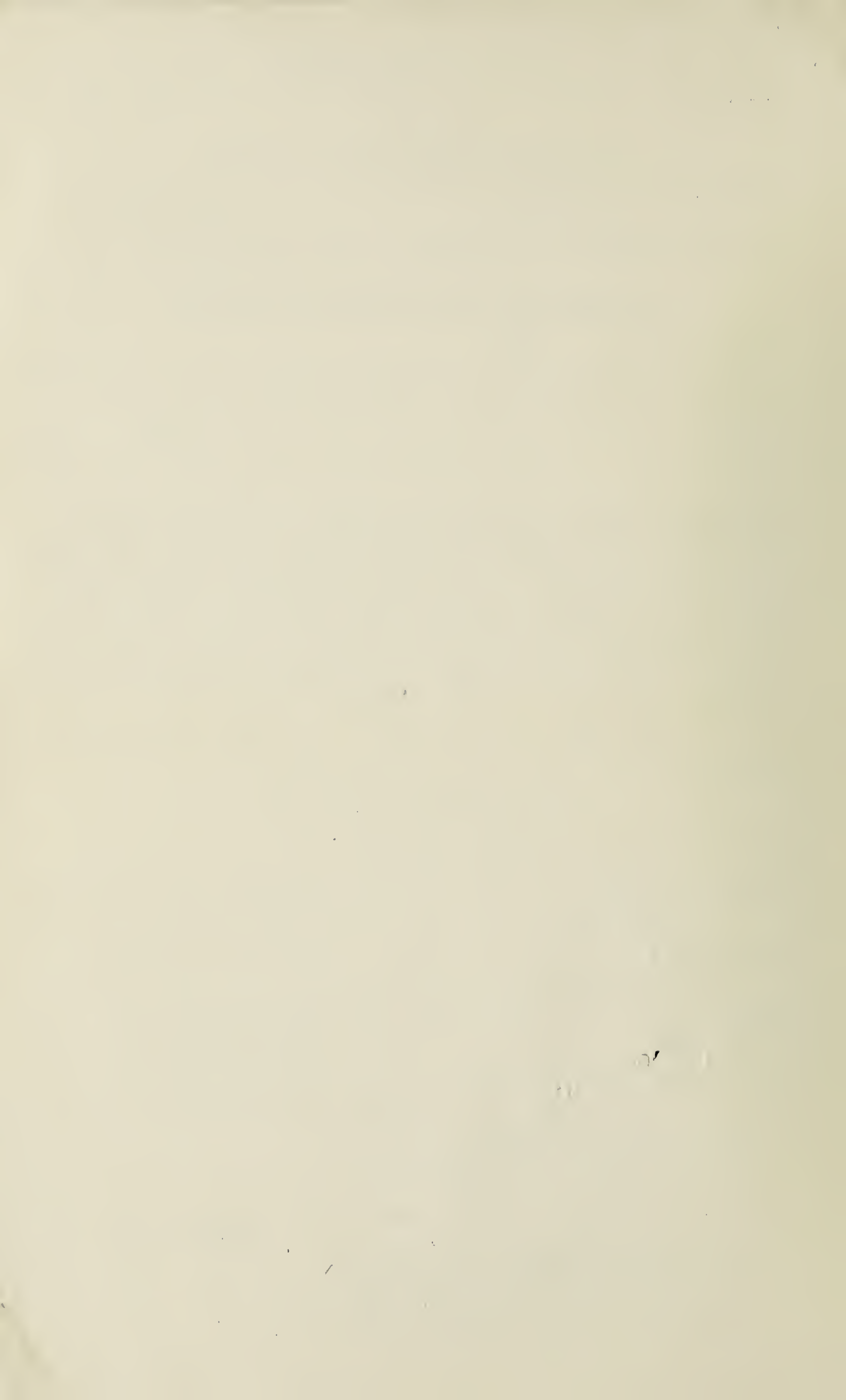
	<u>Total</u>	<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>		
Live Births (Legitimate	84	49	35	) Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population.	13.7
(Illegitimate	3	1	2		
Stillbirths (all legitimate)	4	1	3	Rate per 1,000 total (live and still)births.	44.
Deaths	78	43	35	Death Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population.	12.3

Deaths from puerperal causes: Deaths. Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births.

No. 29. Puerperal sepsis	nil	-
No. 30. Other puerperal causes	nil	-
Total	nil	-

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age:-

	<u>Number.</u>	<u>Rate.</u>
All infants per 1,000 live births ..	6	69
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births ..	6	71
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births ..	-	-



Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	8
" " Measles (all ages)	nil.
" " Whooping Cough (all ages)	1
" " Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	nil.

Whitchurch U.D. England & Wales.

Birth rate per 1,000 of population	13.7	15.1
Death rate " " " (Crude	12.3	
" " " (Corrected	10.7	11.6
Infant death rate per 1,000 born	69	53

Population. This is estimated, by the Registrar-General, as 6,328 for 1938, or 18 persons more than in 1937, and 73 more than at the Census of 1931.

The birth rate was appreciably lower than in the previous year and rather below the average for the District.

Birth rate in the	(1938	..	..	13.7
District per 1,000	(1937	..	..	16.0
population	(1936	..	..	14.3
	(Average of 5 years	1931-35		14.5
	(" " 10 " 1921-30			16.4

Of the total 91 (live and still) births 6, or 6.6 per cent were illegitimate.


			<u>Crude.</u>	<u>Corrected.</u>
Death rate in the	(1938	..	12.3	10.7
District per 1,000	(1937	..	16.5	14.3
population	(1936	..	14.1	12.3
	(Average of 5 years	1931-35	12.2	10.6
	(" " 10 " 1921-30		13.9	-

The death rate for the year was considerably below those of the two preceding years and, when corrected for age and sex distribution, compared favourably with that of the Country as a whole.

The reduction was mainly due to the absence of influenza in fatal form, only one death from this cause in 1938, against 17 in 1937. Only 1 death, from whooping cough, was due to the common infectious diseases. Cancer caused 8 deaths, respiratory tuberculous 3, other tuberculous disease 1, heart disease 27, cerebral haemorrhage 5, acute and chronic nephritis 5, bronchitis 2. No death was due to suicide, and 2 were caused by accident, against 4 in 1937.

Infant death rate. The rate for the year was above the District's recent average which for the past 20 years has maintained a comparatively favourable level and has generally been below that of the Country generally. No special cause is apparent for the higher rate of last year, five out of the six infant deaths being due to causes classed as congenital debility, of weakly or prematurely, born children who did not long survive birth.

The marked improvement in the infant death rate, since 1914, followed on the establishment of the Maternity and Child Welfare in the town by a Voluntary Association, which has done continued excellent work as one of the County Welfare Centres, supervised and provided with medical and health visitor service by the County Council. The comparative rates are:- 1901-06, 103; 1907-14, 104; 1915-19, 82; 1921-30, 46.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2018 with funding from
Wellcome Library

<https://archive.org/details/b30272099>

HEALTH SERVICES IN THE DISTRICT.

As regards the following services, no change has occurred during the year in the arrangements detailed in my Annual Report for 1930:-

Nursing in the Home, Laboratory Facilities, Legislation in force, Hospitals, Ambulance Facilities, Clinics and Treatment Centres.

Ambulance. The Council maintains a modern motor ambulance which is available for all types of cases other than infectious diseases, for residents in the Urban District, and those of surrounding Rural Districts. The services, for ordinary and for infectious cases, provided by the County Council, and described on page 55 of the County Medical Officer's Annual Report for 1937 are also available. There is no co-ordination of these services which appear to be adequate for the ordinary needs of the District.

The attendances for the year at the Whitchurch Child Welfare Centre were:-

	<u>New Cases.</u>	<u>Total cases.</u>	<u>Total attendances.</u>
Under 1 year	73	124	1155
1 to 5 years	28	172	1411
Expectant Mothers	43	53	147

A Tuberculosis examination centre is open here once a month.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water Supply. The Surveyor reports:-

"The total water consumption for the year was 79,219,750 gallons an average consumption per day of 216,954 gallons as compared with a total consumption of 72,010,250 gallons, a daily average of 197,288 gallons for the year 1937, which is an increase of 19,666 gallons.

"There has been no shortage of water experienced during the year nor has there been any observed failure of supplies but in view of the increased consumption of the water and the decrease in rainfall, strong appeals from time to time during the year have been made to the public, for strictest economy to be exercised in the use of water. Frequent inspections throughout the town have also been made to detect leaking through faulty pipes and fittings and in every case where a leakage has been found, notices have been served upon the owners to have the repairs carried out.

"Rainfall. The rainfall as recorded at Fenns Bank for the year 1938 was 24.76 inches as compared with 26.73 inches for the year 1937, a decrease of 1.97 inches. The average yearly rainfall as recorded for the past 25 years amounts to 28.68 inches."

I reported, in my Annual Report for 1937, fully upon the bacteriological and chemical investigations carried out by direction of the Council, and as to the steps taken in consequence of the recommendations that resulted from this investigation. The action taken by the Council included a re-arrangement of the system of chlorination and the installation of a new chlorinating plant at the Waterworks in December (1937). The working of the plant was kept under daily control by examination as to the amount of residual chlorine in the water passing from the Works.

The dosage found to be required was about .707 parts per million and the residual chlorine, after treatment, was found to be 0.15 parts per million at the works, and 0.10 as delivered in the town. This, in my opinion, indicates a very satisfactory result.

Water Analysis. Bacteriological analysis was made monthly from February to June inclusive, samples being taken at the works and in the town. The results were very satisfactory, the water in nearly all samples being found to be practically sterile. In the latter half of the year, the testing was reduced to a quarterly sampling, with my approval, and a sample taken in October in the town showed 2 bacteria per cubic centimetre, or practical sterility.

Drainage and Sewerage. The Surveyor reports:-

"No new sewers have been laid during the year. Repairs have been carried out to several old existing private houses within the district. Work in connection with the cleaning out of the main public sewers in the town has been carried out during the year and much accumulation etc., has been taken out which has greatly improved the free flow of the sewage in the mains.

"A complaint was received of the nuisance caused by the disposal of milk washings from a dairy. Upon a preliminary notice being served upon the owner, a system for chlorinating these washings was put into operation and the nuisance thus abated.

"Stream Pollution. A minor nuisance was caused by the pollution of the watercourse in Mile Bank which was abated immediately upon a preliminary notice being served upon the owner.

"Closet Accomodation.

"No. of W.C's in District	..	1869
"No. of privies outside sewered area		170
"No. of privies demolished	..	Nil
"No. of new W.C's erected	..	35
"No. of old privies now left in the sewered area	..	5

"Scavenging. The collections of house refuse have been carried out satisfactorily during the year and the refuse has been deposited on the Council's two tips at Liverpool Road and Station Road. The Refuse Collection has been extended to Grindley Brook."

The following is an Account Furnished by the Sanitary Inspector, of Sanitary Work for the year.

Number of houses which have been inspected during the above period, either in connection with outbreaks of infectious disease, or in consequence of complaints, or in the course of a systematic Sanitary Survey	1575
--	------

Number of legal notices sent	..	..	..	..	Nil
Number of informal notices sent	..	..	..	..	111
Number of such notices complied with	..	..	..	..	74
Number of letters written	..	..	..	..	17

PARTICULARS OF SANITARY MATTERS REFERRED TO IN THE ABOVE NOTICES:-

(a) Houses to be cleansed after Infectious Disease	..	Nil
(b) Deficient or objectionably water supply	..	Nil
(c) New drains to be constructed or old drains to be amended		9
(d) New closets to be provided or old ones to be amended in construction	..	7
(e) Houses damp or dirty, or admitting rain, or weather, or otherwise in a bad sanitary condition	..	18
(f) Offensive accumulations of all kinds	...	8
(g) Animals so kept as to be a nuisance	..	Nil
(h) Houses overcrowded	..	3

Houses disinfected after infectious disease (other than phthisis)	8
Houses disinfected in cases of phthisis	3
Privies converted to water closets	Nil
Privies converted to earth closets	Nil
Plans for new houses passed	11
Houses connected to public water supply	24
Private wells reconstructed or improved	Nil
Houses connected to public sewerage	24
Lengths of new sewers laid	Nil
Lengths of new water mains laid	Nil

Proceedings before Magistrates: Nil.

M. W. SOWDEN.

Sanitary Inspector.

Shops. Periodical inspection is made of all the shops within the Urban District, by the Sanitary Inspector, as to conditions of ventilation and temperature and proper sanitary conveniences. No action was found necessary.

Camping Sites. None were in use, and no licences have been issued by the Council.

Smoke Abatement. The Surveyor reports:-
"Nuisances have been caused by the emission of black smoke from the chimneys of a Laundry and a Factory. In the one case precautions taken in stoking have abated the nuisance and in the other arrangements are now in hand for new mechanical stoking device to be installed."

Swimming Baths. I have no report of definite progress in the Council's proposed action for enlarging the Public Swimming Bath and of improving the cleansing of the water. No bacteriological examination of the water was made so far as I am aware.

Chlorination is carried out by addition of 'Chloros' to the water periodically.

Eradication of bed bugs.- Particulars of the action taken for the eradication of bed bugs, including information as to:-

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----|
| (1) The number of (a) Council houses | (i) found to be infested. | Nil |
| | (ii) disinfested: | Nil |
| | (b) other houses | |
| | (i) found to be infested. | 4 |
| | (ii) disinfested: | 4 |
- (2) The methods employed for freeing infested houses from bed bugs and the name of the fumigant and/or insecticide used;
Stoving, Sulphur and Salt-petre.
- (3) The methods employed for ensuring that the belongings of tenants are free from vermin before removal to Council houses, Inspection and disinfection where necessary.
- (4) Whether the work of disinfection is carried out by the Local Authority or by a contractor. By the Sanitary Inspector or by instructions given to tenants.
- (5) The measures taken by way of supervision or education of tenants to prevent infestation or re-infestation after cleansing. Frequent and periodic inspection of houses; and warnings given in suspicious and dirty conditions when found.

Schools. The schools have been frequently visited and found to be in a clean and sanitary condition. They are served by the public water supply and sewerage.

Lodging Houses. The two registered houses have been frequently visited and found to be kept clean and well ventilated, and have been well conducted.

HOUSING STATISTICS.

1. Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the Year:-

- | | |
|---|------|
| (1) (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) .. | 1365 |
| (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose .. | 3819 |
| (2) (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1935 and 1932 | 187 |
| (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose .. | 246 |
| (3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation .. | Nil |
| (4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation | 18 |

2.	Remedy of Defects during the Year without Service of formal Notices:-		
	Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	..	11
3.	Action under Statutory Powers during the Year:-		
(a)	Proceedings under sections 9,10,and 16, of the Housing Act, 1936:		
(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	..	Nil
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:-		
(a)	By owners	..	Nil
(b)	By Local authority in default of owners	..	Nil
(b)	Proceedings under Public Health Acts.		
(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	..	Nil
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:-		
(a)	By owners	..	Nil
(b)	By Local authority in default of owners	..	Nil
(c)	Proceedings under sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936		
(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	..	Nil
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolitions Orders	..	23
(d)	Proceedings under section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936:		
(1)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made	..	Nil
(2)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit	..	Nil

Housing Act 1936 - Part IV - Overcrowding:-

(a)	(i) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year	Ordinary houses	11
		Council houses	2
		Total	13
	(ii) Number of families dwelling therein	..	13
	(iii) Number of persons dwelling therein	Ordinary houses	82
		Council houses	20
		Total	102
(b)	Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year.	Ordinary Houses	3
(c)	(i) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year	Ordinary Houses	3
	(ii) Number of persons concerned in such cases	..	25
(d)	Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding		Nil

As regards the three new cases of overcrowding occurring, the Inspector reports that in two cases abatement was secured by the service of informal notices. In the third case the family was removed to a Council House.

In the case of the 13 dwellings remaining overcrowded at the end of the year, Council houses were offered, as suitable alternative accommodation, in six cases and were refused in each case.

HOUSING, CONSOLIDATED AMENDMENT, REGULATIONS, 1932.

(3) The number of representations made to the Local Authority with a view to (a) the service of notices requiring the execution of works or (b) the making of demolition or closing orders;

(a) .. nil
(b) .. nil

(7) The number of houses in respect of which an undertaking was accepted under subsection (2) of Section 19 of the Housing Act, 1930; .. nil

New Housing. Twenty-four houses were built by private enterprise and one new house was provided by the Council by conversion of an office. The number of houses owned by the Council is 266, or some 14 per cent of the total in the District.

Housing (Rural Workers) Acts 1926 and 1938. The Surveyor reports:-

"Applications from two owners have been received during the year for assistance under these Acts for the reconditioning of 5 cottages Nos. 1,2,3,4, and 5 Blackoe Cottages, all of which were granted. The work on two of the cottages Nos. 1 and 2 is nearing completion and the work on the other 3 cottages Nos. 3,4, and 5 is now being proceeded with.

The completion of this scheme will bring the number of houses dealt with under this Act to a total of 7.

"House Conversion. A scheme for the conversion of an office into a dwelling house, for which approval of a loan sanction had previously been obtained from the Ministry of Health, was completed during the early part of the year. The house consists of one living room and two bedrooms together with a Scullery, bathroom, "W.C. and Pantry."

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Inspection of Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops for the year.

Number of (1) Milk Producers on Register	..	55
Wholesalers	..	55
Retailers only	..	12
(2) Registered Dairies	..	52
(3) Registered Milkshops	..	5

Number of Inspections made	..	115
----------------------------	----	-----

Defects found (1) in cowsheds:-

(a) floors	..	Nil
(b) ventilation	..	Nil
(c) lighting	..	Nil
(d) structure of floor	..	Nil
(e) drainage	..	1
(f) cleanliness	..	4
(g) water supply	..	Nil
(2) Approach paving to cowsheds	..	Nil
(3) Dairies	..	Nil
(4) Milkshops	..	Nil

Number of preliminary notices served	..	1
--------------------------------------	----	---

Number of these notices complied with	..	1
---------------------------------------	----	---

Number of defects found and verbal notice given to remedy these defects	..	4
---	----	---

Number of verbal notices complied with	..	4
--	----	---

Number of cowsheds erected by milk producers on farm premises during the year..	..	1
---	----	---

Number of dairies erected by milk producers on farm premises during the year..	..	1
--	----	---

Number of Tuberculin Tested (Certified) milk sellers in District	at end of year	1
" " Tuberculin Tested (Grade A)	" " " " " "	1
" " Pasteurised	" " " " " "	Nil
" " Accredited	" " " " " "	17

M. . . SOWDEN.

Sanitary Inspector.

Meat and Other Foods The Inspector reports:-

"Slaughter-houses. The five licenced and one registered slaughter-houses in the District (including one for pigs only and one for calves only) have been inspected regularly and found to be kept in a clean sanitary condition. A humane killer is used in all the slaughter-houses and no carcasses or parts were found to be tuberculous or otherwise unfit for human consumption. There are 18 licenced slaughtermen in the District."

"Meat Inspection.

"Carcasses Inspected and Condemned.

	Cattle, ex- cluding Cows.	Sheep and Pigs.	Cows.	Calves.	Lambs.
"Number killed (if known) ..	640	Nil	109	2970	1862
"Number inspected ..	155	Nil	25	695	460
"All diseases except Tuberculosis "Whole carcasses condemned ..	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
"Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned ..	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
"Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis ..	-	-	-	-	-
"Tuberculosis only. "Whole carcasses condemned ..	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
"Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned ..	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
"Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis ..	-	-	-	-	-

"Bakehouses. The eleven registered bakehouses within the District have been regularly inspected and found to be in a good sanitary condition."

"Other places where food is prepared. These places are regularly inspected and are kept in a good and clean sanitary condition."

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

Diphtheria antitoxin is supplied by the District Council, free of cost to cases of the poorer class, through the Surveyor who holds a stock and supplies medical men upon request. Antitoxin is in general use in all but very slight cases. In accordance with the recommendations of the Ministry of Health's Memorandum of July, 1922, the Surveyor was authorised to hold and supply antitoxin in phials of 8,000 units for treatment, and of 500 units for protective purposes.

Disinfection of infected rooms and articles is carried out by the Sanitary Inspector by means of formalin spray or vapor lamps.

Diphtheria Immunisation. The Council in 1936, upon my recommendation and with the sanction of the Ministry of Health, adopted a scheme whereby parents of the poorer classes are enabled to obtain protection of their children against diphtheria infection by a process of active immunisation.

During the year the immunisation of 18 children was carried out under the conditions of the Council's scheme. I am glad to note this as a first start towards the protection of children from Diphtheria infection.

The incidence of infectious disease during the year was light. There was no epidemic. Five scattered cases of Scarlet Fever were notified. One was removed to Hospital under the Council's arrangement.

Diphtheria. Three cases, only, came to light, of which one was clearly a case of imported infection. One case was removed to Hospital. In October three children in one family were reported from one of the Elementary Schools as absent with supposed tonsillitis. I arranged for the swabbing of these children and they were all reported to show diphtheria bacilli. They were regarded as "Carriers" and excluded from school, precautions against spread of infection being also taken in the home.

Notifiable Diseases during the Year.

Disease	Total cases notified	Cases admitted to Hospital	Total Deaths
Small-pox	-	-	-
Scarlet fever	5	1	-
Diphtheria	3	1	-
Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid)	-	-	-
Puerperal pyrexia	-	-	-
Pneumonia	1	-	-

Ophthalmia Neonatorum	Cases			Vision un-impaired	Vision im-paired	Total Blindness	Deaths
	Notified	Treated					
		At home	In hospital				
	Nil	-	-	-	-	-	-

Tuberculosis.

Age-Periods	New Cases				Deaths			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
15-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
25-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
35-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
45-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-
55-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-
65- and upwards	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	-
Total	2	3	-	1	-	3	1	-

No death was that of a non-notified case.

Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925. No action was taken or found necessary, as to tuberculous employees in the milk trade.

Public Health Act, 1925, Section 62. No action was necessary for application for an order for compulsory removal to hospital.

M. GEPF.

Medical Officer of Health.

Shrewsbury.
24th June, 1939.

